

Accessibility Subgroup
Vote Indiana Team
March 21, 2003

Members Present: Christine Dallberg (proxy for Suellen Jackson-Boner), Col. Joe Ryan, Nick Rhoad, Kristi Robertston, Dick Dodge, Secretary of State Todd Rokita and Dee Ann Hart.
Facilitator: Anita Kolkmeier

Others present: Bill Ensign, Julia Vaughn (Count Us In), Mike and Edelle Rothrock (Count Us In), Mark McCammon, Sean White

The subgroup started with introductions. There were no additions or corrections to the minutes.

The subgroup was given a copy of the draft plan relating to accessibility. After reading the draft, the subgroup began a discussion on how the plan could be clarified. Kristi asked for clarification relating to the duties of the Secretary of State and the Election Division since both were addressed in the draft.

The subgroup then questioned the definition of accessibility in the first paragraph. Christine suggested inserting "in accordance with ADA guidelines" at the end of the first paragraph. The group then asked if the ADA covered voting booths. Christine said that they are not specific to voting booths, but standards are applicable to the chute. The group received a copy of SECTIONS 3-5 of SB 477 which defined an accessible facility. The group discussed the possibility of adding a reference to this Section if it becomes law.

Col. Ryan asked if we needed a definition of accessible: (1) polling place, (2) site, (3) voting machine (4) communications.

Laramore said that the ADA covers the definition of the first two on the list, quite comprehensively. The equipment is not specifically addressed in HAVA, but the Election Administration Commission, when created under HAVA (currently scheduled for Fall 2003), will deal with this issue.

The group felt that adding the "in accordance with the ADA guidelines" gave the draft more of a standard for accessibility. Col. Ryan reminded the group that we need a comprehensive document that won't burden the county with looking things up in other various laws and manuals. The group agreed that it would be helpful to insert a reference to the Indiana law once it passes. Kristi reminded the group that this is a time where the legislative process is going on at the same time and one may affect the other.

Nick asked if the group wanted to make any suggestions under the training regarding how to address the individual and what they can do to make improvements in training. Dee Ann recommended that the ADA be put in the training process. Christine further stated that there are numerous federal materials on poll worker training. Nick also questioned the apprehensiveness of the poll workers who may question if they will be sued for not knowing exactly what to do or

how to treat an individual with a disability. Christine said that if you have good training then that would reduce the anxiety.

Col. Ryan asked about the timing of training for poll workers. Kristi explained that there is training before every election. The idea of making this a requirement is being discussed by the training and education subgroup. The IED has training every year for election officials. Laramore said training is difficult and that simply making training mandatory does not work. Kristi said that the inspector gets additional money by attending the training in some counties. Dick Dodge pointed out that Steuben County does not pay inspectors for training and that the inspector is the only poll worker who is trained.

Dodge also questioned the third paragraph of the draft. He said that “Local election officials must work with members of the community” is too vague. Dee Ann suggested that we need a definition of “work with.” She suggested “the disability community be involved in the selection.” Dodge stated the concern that there is a different situation in every county relating to the election boards.

Christine was asked about the Governor’s Planning Council for People with Disabilities involvement in this process. Christine said that the Council could help identify people with disabilities who have gone through advocacy training. They would support people working with various counties and could help with transportation. The CIF funds are very limited. Kristi said that this could help the county understand the practical aspects and the standards that they need to meet. This would involve people who can give suggestions.

Laramore suggested that the Civil Rights Commission could be another resource. They have the technical expertise. They understand the technical aspects of ADA. Christine also mentioned the Fire and Building Safety Code Commission as another resource.

The subgroup also discussed the machines used throughout the states and Kristi reminded the group that the voting equipment was certified by the IED before the county could use or purchase the machines. Dee Ann said that it would be beneficial if the entire state used the same machines, but they all agreed that would be very complicated.

The subgroup returned to flushing out the issue of the local election officials “working with” the member of the disability community. Deeann suggested seek input from disability community. Todd further suggested requiring that the county discuss this with the Governor’s Council. Christine said that every county has someone from the disability community, but she questioned whether every county would have someone who is willing and interested in helping. She also said that there would not be too many where the council couldn’t find a contact person.

The group discussed having an advisory council, consisting of a member from the disability community or elderly community. They all thought that would be easy to populate. Dee Ann also said that we could target other agencies that may not specifically deal with advocacy but they would have a wide variety of people they serve and would be willing to assist.

Col. Ryan asked how we lock it up with a qualified person. Dee Ann answered that there are numerous people just waiting to be asked. Christine said that Count Us In and the Consumer Investment Fund would consider doing the funding for training to help with this advisory council.

The subgroup then reached a consensus that every county election board has to establish an advisory council which must include a member of the elderly or disability community. The local government may consult the Governor's Council to identify qualified individuals in their community. The advisory council must be chosen in a timely manner, ideally before a survey is conducted.

Julia Vaughn presented information to the subgroup regarding the costs of the survey. She talked with Hollister Bundy of Inclusion Solution. His estimate was \$150/hr and approximately 20 sites per day with a total of approximately \$150,000. She also talked with Emma Lewis Sullivan from the Resource Center for Independent Living. Her estimate was \$25/day. Julia suggested using an RFP and guessed the total cost would be in the 6 figures. It was also mentioned that Marion, Lake and Allen have already done surveys and suggested that recent data like this could be used which would significantly reduce the data that we need to collect and the costs.

Col. Ryan asked if it was conceivable to ask various agencies that already do this type of work, for example fire departments, to do the surveys. Col. Ryan also suggested that we consider IU and PU graduates who have a degree in this type of work. Laramore commented that many counties might want their own county building agencies to do their counties' surveys. **He also said that he could talk to the State Building Code Agency.** Col. Ryan thought that would be a good idea to channel money back into the state.

Julia said that they would still want to include members of the disability community in the survey process and this would be the roadmap to getting 100% accessibility.

Laramore said that asking different groups to do the survey may be practically difficult because we could end up with 92 different solutions. Christine showed the group an accessibility checklist and suggested developing something similar. It could be simple but have much detail to make sure that everything is right. Christine said that with good training on the survey instrument, advocates could do the survey. Having individuals from the disability community involved helps get the community aware.

Todd also reported that he spoke to Tom Gallagher from Protections and Advocacy Services. Tom wanted to make a presentation to the group after March 31, 2003. **Todd will contact him after that to schedule his appearance.**

Todd also presented the subgroup with a flowchart delineating Indiana's share of the possible HAVA funding. These figures are only estimates. The flowchart is part of the record.

Public Comment:

Mike Rothrock: Poll worker training needs to be mandatory. He has a big concern with the building inspectors in the counties being involved in the process because he believes that the inspectors do not understand Chapter 11 of the ADA.

Mark McCammon: His precinct in North Vernon which is ironically in a Senior Housing Addition is inaccessible. The ramp leads up the door with no landing. He said that when things are built, accessibility should be the top priority.

Julia Vaughn: It is our desire to help the subgroup and maximize the involvement of members of the disability community.

The group has reached a consensus that there must be training for poll workers and those who select the polling sites as well.

Agenda for next meeting: Review and discuss the draft.